

REMARKS

The Final Office Action dated March 2, 2006, has been carefully considered. Claims 1-6, 11, and 23-28 are pending. Applicant requests that the Examiner consider the following remarks, and pass the application to allowance.

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION:**Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102:**

Claims 1, 5, 6, 11, 23, 27, and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Byrnes, U.S. Patent No. 6,179,343.

Claims 1 recites a pipe coupling consisting of: an elongated housing comprising a first end and a second end, the housing defining an elongated bore therein; a stop located on an inner diameter of the housing, the stop located between the first end and the second ends of the housing, wherein a distance from the stop to one of the first and second ends is at least two times a distance from the stop to the other of the first and second end of the housing; a first cylindrical bore extending from the first end to the stop; and a second cylindrical bore extending from the second end to the stop, wherein the angle between the first cylindrical bore and the second cylindrical bore is about 15 degrees to about 165 degrees, and wherein each of the cylindrical bores are configured to allow a pipe end to advance into the pipe coupling until reaching the stop. (Emphasis added).

Claim 11 recites a pipe coupling consisting of: an elongated housing comprising a first end and a second end, the housing defining an elongated bore therein; a stop located on an inner diameter of the housing, the stop located between the first end and the second ends of the housing, wherein a distance from the stop to one of the first and second ends is at least two times a distance from the stop to the other of the first and second end of the housing; a first cylindrical bore extending from the first end to the stop; and a second cylindrical bore extending from the second end to the stop, wherein the angle between the first cylindrical bore and the second cylindrical bore is about 15 degrees to about 165 degrees, and wherein each of the cylindrical bores are configured to allow a pipe end to advance into the pipe coupling until reaching the stop. (Emphasis added).

Claim 23 recites a pipe coupling comprising: an elongated housing comprising a first end and a second end, the housing defining an elongated bore therein; a single stop located on an inner diameter of the housing, the stop located between the first end and the second ends of the housing, wherein a distance from the stop to one of the first and second ends is at least two times a distance from the stop to the other of the first and second end of the housing; a first cylindrical bore extending from the first end to the stop; and a second cylindrical bore extending from the second end to the stop, wherein an angle between the first cylindrical bore and the second cylindrical bore is about 15 degrees to about 165 degrees. (Emphasis added).

Byrnes relates to a pipe elbow having two parts, each part having an arcuate segment. The arcuate segment of the first part fits sealably into the arcuate segment of the second part. By severing a portion of the arcuate segment of the first part at an angle needed for a specific run of pipe and inserting it into the arcuate segment of the second part, the assembled elbow will conform to the required angle. In addition, a sloped shoulder on the outside of the first part fits in close proximity to the end of the second part to ensure an extension of the first part into the second part in order to meet industry standards for minimum overlap of mating parts. An angled end on the arcuate segment of the second part may also be provided. See abstract.

In contrast to the combination of features as recited in Claim 1, Byrnes does not teach or suggest a pipe coupling having a first cylindrical bore extending from the first end to the stop; and a second cylindrical bore extending from the second end to the stop. Rather, in Byrnes each segment is arcuate. Accordingly, for the reasons set forth above, Claims 1, 11 and 23 should be allowable. Claims 5, 6, 27, and 28 are dependent from Claims 1, 11 or 23 and should also be allowable for the reasons set forth above.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claims 2-3 and 24-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Byrnes in view of McIlroy (USPN 3,995,888).

McIlroy relates to a flexible pipe connector having a plurality of segmented sections fabricated along precast or scribed frangible lines. McIlroy, however, does

not teach or suggest a pipe coupling having a first cylindrical bore extending from the first end to the stop; and a second cylindrical bore extending from the second end to the stop. Accordingly, for the reasons set forth above, Claims 2-3 and 24-26 should be allowable.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that the claims are presently in condition for immediate allowance, and such action is requested. If, however, any matters remain that can be clarified by the Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is cordially invited to contact the undersigned by telephone at the number below. In the event that there are any questions concerning the amendments or the application in general, the Examiner is respectfully urged to contact the undersigned so that prosecution may be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: April 13, 2006

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